



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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COUNTY KICKS OFF “DON’T MESS WITH ASBESTOS” CAMPAIGN *Rise in Violations Prompt New Push to Raise Awareness on Dangers of Asbestos*

The County Air Pollution Control District, Environmental Health Department and County Counsel are launching a “new” campaign to raise awareness about the dangers of asbestos to renters, homeowners, workers and contractors.

“Because of a recent rise in asbestos violations involving condo conversions, the County is stepping up efforts to educate the public about the health hazards associated with asbestos and how to properly comply with the law. The County is encouraging residents to “Check before You Wreck,” meaning to check for asbestos before renovating or demolishing portions of your home, apartment or condo, especially if it was built before 1980,” said Dick Smith, Director of the County Air Pollution Control District.

If asbestos-containing materials are disturbed during remodeling or demolition, fibers can be released, which is a health hazard for **anyone** who comes in contact with them. There is no known safe level of exposure to asbestos. All asbestos should be avoided. If asbestos is left undisturbed, it is not likely to harm you-**so don’t mess with it!** When asbestos fibers are inhaled, they can remain in the lungs for a long time. It can take 15 to 40 years after exposure to asbestos for cancer or respiratory diseases to develop.

As part of the campaign, officials will demonstrate how to identify asbestos in your home, apartment or condo and will show the steps to take to have asbestos tested at your residence. Tip cards, posters, DVD public service announcements and a Web site have all been developed as a part of the educational campaign. Materials are available in both English and Spanish.

For more information on asbestos, visit our new Web site at www.sdasbestos.org.

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